

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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EO 11652: GDS-1981

TAGS: MARR, TH

SUBJECT: WEAPONS RANGES IN THAILAND

REF: STATE 1072 40

1. SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS ARE ALMOST COMPLET FOR JOINT JMAF/ USAF USE OF CHANDY RANGE WHICH SHOULD, WITH COMPARATIVELY MINOR MODIFICATIONS, ACCOMMODATE SCOREABLE WEAPONS TRAINING REQUIREMENTS. WE FORESEE NO PROBLEMS SUBJECT TO CINCPACAF APPROVAL OF MODES COSTS AND PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS.

2. EXISTING UDORN JETTISON AREA IS NOT ADEQUATE FOR TACTICAL WEAPONS RANGE AND, SUBJECT TO RTG APPROVAL, PRESENTLY APPROVED AREA WILL HAVE TO BE EXPANDED. BASES ON CURRENT INFORMATION, THIS COULD INVOLVE SOME LAND ACQUISITION, DISPLACEMENT OF RESIDENTS AND LOCAL OPPOSITION AS A RESULT OF THAI DEATHS AND INJURIES IN FEBRUARY AND MAY 1973 CAUSES BY EMERGENCY BOM DROPS ON OR NEAR THE EXISTING JETTISON AREA.

3. WE INITIALLY REQUESTED IN WRITING APPROVAL OF LTG KRAINGSACK, SUPR CMD (FWD), TO INCORPORATE THE UDORN WEAPONS RANGE PROPOSAL IN

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ONGOING MISSION/ USAF/ RTAF NEGOTIATIONS WHICH ARE JOINTLY
ATTEMPTING
TO RESOLVE CRUCIAL AND EXTENSIVE US REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAINING
AIR SPACE, AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL PROCEDURES, US OF CHANDY RANGE, AND
A
NUMBER OF OTHER PROBLEMS RELATING TO AIR TRAINING IN A PARTIAL/
COMPLETE CEASEFIRE SITUATION. INFORMALLY THE RTAF HAD AGREED TO
CONSIDER URODN AS JOINT USE AREA WHILE AT SAME TIME INTIMATING
THAT ANOTHER UNSPECIFIED LOCATION MIGHT HAVE TO BE FOUND. LTG
KRAINGSAK INFORMED US THAT EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY ALL DISCUSSIONS THIS
SUBJECT WOULD BE WITH
SUPR CMD (FWD) AND THAT THERE WOULD BE NO DISCUSSION WITH ANY
OTHER
RTG AGENCY AT ANY LEVEL.

4. AT FIRST OPPORTUNITY, ACTING CHIEF POMIL MET WITH LTG KRAINGSAK
ON JUNE 18. AFTER EXPRESSING SATISFACTION WITH PROGRESS BEING MADE
IN JOINTLY SOLVING OTHER PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH KEEPING LARGE US
AIR CAPABILITY TRAINED AND RESPONSEIVE, LTG KRAINGSAK REITERATED THAT
TACTICAL WEAPONS RANGE ACQUISITION WAS A MATTER TO BE NEGOTIATED
AND
DISCUSSED AT SUPR CMD LEVEL ONLY. HE THEN DIRECTED HIS STAFF MAKE
ARRANGEMENTS FOR A SURVEY TO BE CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE THE
FEASIBILITY

OF OUR PROPOSAL FOR USE OF UDORN AREA. IN SUPPORT OF THIS SURVEY,
WE HAVE PROVIDED AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE RANGE AREA, OFFERED
HELICOPTER SUPPORT AND SUGGESTED US PARTICIPATION. WE ARE HOPEFUL
THAT THAI WILL LAUNCH SURVEY WITHIN TWO WEEKS.

4. COMMENT: JUDGING FROM TONE TAKEN BY PRIME MINISTER THANON IN
HIS JUNE 20 PRESS CONFERENCE (BANGKOK 9567) , RTG WILL APPROACH A
TACTICAL WEAPONS RANGE WITH CAUTION AND CONCERN FOR PROBABLE
ADVERSE
PUBLIC REACTION TO US BOMBINGS PRACTICE IN A AREA OTHER THAN CHANDY,
OR IN FACT TO ANY NEW RTG ACCOMMODATION WHICH WOULD TEND TO
HEIGHTEN
US MILITARY VISIBILITY. WHILE WE WILL ACTIVELY SEEK RTG APPROVAL
AND BELIEVE KRAINGSAK WILL RENDER ALL POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE, THERE IS
REAL POSSIBILITY SUCH APPROVAL MAY BE LONG ELAYED OR EVEN DENIED.
CONSEQUENTLY, EVEN WITH MAXIMUM USE OF CHANDY RANGE, IT MAY BE
NECESSARY TO CONTEMPLATE TDY DEPLOYMENT TO CLARK FOR TRAINING.
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